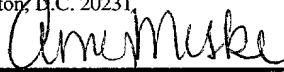


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Signature of person mailing paper or fee

## IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re continuation patent application of: )  
Mark W. Bleyer et al. ) Before the Examiner  
Application No.: New U.S. Continuation )  
Application Filed Herewith ) Group Art Unit  
Filed: December 19, 2001 )  
)

### PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Assistant Commissioner of Patents  
Washington, D. C. 20231

Sir:

Please enter the following Preliminary Amendment for the above-entitled patent application. Please charge any fees due or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 23-3030, but not to include issue fees.

#### IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the first paragraph on page 1 of the Patent Application under the heading "REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION" to read as follows:

--The present application is a continuation of Patent Application No. 09/444,881 filed November 22, 1999, which claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Patent Application, Serial No. 60/110,407, filed December 1, 1998, each of which is hereby incorporated by  
Preliminary Amendment  
Inventor: Mark W. Bleyer  
Application No.: New U.S. Continuation Application Filed Herewith  
Page 1 of 2

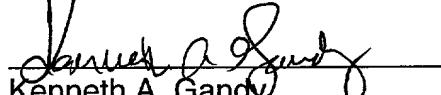
reference in its entirety.--

## **REMARKS**

The present Application is a continuation of U.S. Patent Application No. 09/444,881 filed November 22, 1999 and claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. Serial No. 60/110,407 filed December 1, 1998. This Preliminary Amendment amends the specification to reflect this.

Consideration of the present application as amended is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted:

  
Kenneth A. Gandy  
Reg. No. 33,386  
Woodard, Emhardt, Naughton  
Moriarty & McNett  
Bank One Center Tower  
11 Monument Circle, Suite 3700  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-5137  
(317) 634-3456